The Frick Collection

MEMBERS' MAGAZINE FALL 2018

Luigi Valadier

Splendor in Eighteenth-Century Rome

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MICHAEL BODYCOMB

Letter from the Director

As you may have heard, we are in discussions with The Metropolitan Museum of Art about the possibility of temporarily moving a selection of works from the permanent collection to the Breuer building on Madison and 75th Street during the planned enhancement and renovation of our facilities, slated to begin sometime in 2020. This would enable us to continue to present artworks during our expected period of closure, as well as offering members, scholars, students, and visitors continued access to the resources of the Frick Art Reference Library and our innovative education programs. While this temporary move depends on receiving public approval for our proposed building project, we are excited by the many possibilities it would afford. I look forward to sharing more with you as details are finalized.

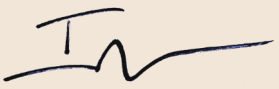
As we continue to plan for the future of the Frick, we present three wonderful exhibitions this fall. *Luigi Valadier: Splendor in Eighteenth-Century Rome* is the Frick's third show to focus on a major figure of the decorative arts, following *Gold, Jasper, and Carnelian: Johann Christian Neuber at the Saxon Court* (2012) and *Pierre Gouthière: Virtuoso Gilder at the French Court* (2016–17). Like the objects made by Neuber and Gouthière, Valadier's works were prized throughout Europe. The exhibition and the groundbreaking catalogue that accompanies it together offer the definitive study of an artist who deserves more attention, and his spectacular table centerpiece displayed in the Oval Room should not be missed.

Since its opening in 2011, the Portico Gallery, with its brilliant natural light, has provided the perfect setting for installations of ceramics: the Arnhold Collection of Meissen porcelain, Henry Clay Frick's treasured Sèvres pieces, and Melinda and Paul Sullivan's whimsical Du Paquier. We now present a spectacular group of faience from the collection of Trustee Sidney R. Knafel, which traces the history of this type of tin-glazed earthenware across France from Marseille to Lyon to Rouen during the sixteenth through eighteenth century.

Currently on view in the Cabinet Gallery is *The Charterhouse of Bruges: Jan Van Eyck, Petrus Christus, and Jan Vos,* which looks closely at two masterpieces of early Netherlandish painting and the patronage of the Carthusian monk who commissioned them. The show, curated by Emma Capron, is the latest organized by an Anne L. Poulet Curatorial Fellow, doctoral candidates who spend two years at the Frick researching an exhibition while completing their dissertations. Another Poulet Fellow, Alexander Noelle, writes in this issue about Bertoldo di Giovanni's *Shield Bearer,* a featured work in the exhibition he is preparing for 2019. The Frick boasts one of the world's great collections of Renaissance bronzes and has presented distinguished monographs on several masters of the medium, including Riccio and Antico. Next year's Bertoldo show will likewise be an in-depth examination of this pivotal artist, who trained with Donatello and mentored Michelangelo.

I hope that you will make time to see these shows and that you will return to the galleries again and again to further explore the subjects that interest you most.

With best wishes,



Ian Wardropper
Director

MICHAEL BODYCOMB

The Frick Collection

MEMBERS' MAGAZINE FALL 2018

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A marquetry-veneered barometer clock made by Isaac Thuret and Jacques Thuret, with a case by André-Charles Boulle, ca. 1690–1700, shown with John C. Johansen's posthumous portrait of Henry Clay Frick, 1943. The objects are displayed in the Library Gallery.

FRONT AND BACK COVERS
Luigi Valadier (1726–1785), *Herm of Bacchus,* 1773, bronze, *alabastro a rosa, bianco e nero antico*, and *africano verde*, Galleria Borghese, Rome; photographs by Mauro Magliani

SPECIAL EXHIBITION

The Charterhouse of Bruges

Jan van Eyck, Petrus Christus, and Jan Vos

September 18, 2018, through January 13, 2019

The Carthusians belonged to one of the most austere monastic orders of the late Middle Ages, removed entirely from the secular world and committed to a life of solitude and silence spent mostly within the confines of their cells. These ascetic ideals belied a complex attitude toward ornament and images. While specific images were cited as distracting luxuries in the order's regulations, others were valued as important tools for meditation, and the Carthusians' monasteries, known as charterhouses, became rich repositories of painted panels, illuminated manuscripts, funerary monuments, altarpieces, and other fine works of art.

In April 1441, the Carthusian monk Jan Vos was elected prior of the Charterhouse of Genadedal, an important monastery near Bruges that was patronized by the dukes of Burgundy and the city's foremost patrician families. Soon after his arrival in Bruges, Vos commissioned *The Virgin and Child with St. Barbara, St. Elizabeth, and Jan Vos* (opposite page) from Jan van Eyck, who laid out the painting's composition. Following the artist's death in June 1441, the panel was completed by an unknown member of his workshop. Several years later, Vos commissioned the closely related *Virgin and Child with St. Barbara and Jan Vos* from Petrus Christus (page 4). Reunited for only the second time in their history, the panels are presented at The Frick Collection with a selection of objects that place them in the rich monastic context for which they were created. The exhibition pays tribute to Vos as a patron and offers insight into the role these images played in shaping monastic life in fifteenth-century Bruges.

It was not uncommon for preeminent Netherlandish masters to paint important works for Carthusian monasteries, most famously Rogier van der Weyden, who, about 1455–64, gifted his monumental *Crucifixion* (now in the collection of El Escorial, Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo, Madrid) to the Charterhouse of Scheut, near Brussels, and another panel (possibly depicting the Virgin, now lost) to the Charterhouse of Herne, where his son was a monk.

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RIGHT
Petrus Christus (ca. 1410–1475/76), *Portrait of a Carthusian Lay Brother*, 1446, oil on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

OPPOSITE PAGE
Jan van Eyck (ca. 1390–1441) and workshop, *The Virgin and Child with St. Barbara, St. Elizabeth, and Jan Vos*, ca. 1441–43, oil on masonite, transferred from panel, The Frick Collection

Genadedal boasted impressive works of art as well. In addition to the Van Eyck Virgin and the Petrus Christus panel (commonly known as the Exeter Virgin, after the British collection in which it was first documented), a small choir book from Genadedal is included in the exhibition. One of the only surviving illustrated manuscripts from the charterhouse's library, its decoration is worn from generations of monks touching and kissing the holy figures depicted within its pages. Another outstanding work in the exhibition is associated with Genadedal: Petrus Christus's *Portrait of a Carthusian Lay Brother* (below). Painted in 1446, it probably depicts one of the charterhouse's members and is one of the earliest surviving portraits of a cleric not depicted in the act of praying.

There are additional ties of patronage that exist between the charterhouse and Van Eyck and Petrus Christus: for instance, the wealthy merchant Pieter II Adornes, who joined Genadedal in 1454 following the death of his wife, had previously been portrayed by Petrus Christus and had probably commissioned two panels from Van Eyck of *The Stigmatization of St. Francis* (identified today as works in the Galleria Sabauda in Turin and the Philadelphia Museum of Art).

Though different in scale, the Frick and Exeter Virgins share remarkably similar imagery, composition, and fine execution. Both scenes depict Vos being introduced to the Virgin and Child by Saint Barbara, and are set within elaborate porticos opening on a panoramic cityscape; the panels achieve remarkable monumentality while conveying myriad minute details. Kneeling on holy ground removed from the city below, Vos

MICHAEL BODYCOMB

exemplifies the Carthusian ideal of isolation from the world. The prior's choice of patron saints has been connected to his earlier career as a Teutonic Knight, a military religious order that looked after the relics of Elizabeth of Hungary, a noblewoman who renounced worldly goods to devote herself to the poor and who is depicted as a nun in the Frick panel. Saint Barbara is shown in both the Frick and Exeter panels with her attribute, the tower where her father imprisoned her to prevent (unsuccessfully) her conversion to Christianity. Barbara was the patron saint of artillerymen and, as such, was especially revered by the Teutonic Knights. The story of her confinement in the tower must have also resonated with the reclusive Carthusians: during the late Middle Ages, charterhouses were often compared to prisons. The Virgin features as the central object of veneration in both the Frick and Exeter panels, as she does in a diptych and a clay tablet (both lost) that Vos is known to have owned. This reflects not only the ubiquity of the Virgin's cult during the late Middle Ages, but also her importance as patron of the Carthusian order.

Because of the panel's diminutive size (7 ⅝ x 5 ½ in.), it is probable that the Exeter Virgin served a devotional purpose. As the fourteenth-century Carthusian writer Guillaume d'Ivrée recounted, such images were frequently found in monks' cells, where they were meant to "excite devotion and imagination, and augment devotional ideas." This is consistent with meditative practices of the period, which relied on physical images to help conjure mental ones. Images provided the crucial first step for this spiritual progress: they helped focus the monks' minds and allowed them to visualize themselves in the presence of holy beings. Looking at his own likeness in the

CHRISTOPH SCHMIDT

ABOVE
Petrus Christus, *The Virgin and Child with St. Barbara and Jan Vos* (*Exeter Virgin*), ca. 1450, oil on panel, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin

OPPOSITE PAGE
Attributed to Petrus Christus, *The Virgin and Child with a Donor*, after *The Virgin and Child with Canon Nicolas van Maelbeke* by Van Eyck and his workshop, ca. 1445, silverpoint on paper, The Albertina, Vienna

company of the Virgin, Christ, and Saint Barbara would have helped Vos visualize this divine encounter. This reliance on mental images and visualization is not so different from exercises promoted by mindfulness meditation today. Images were all the more important for an order whose members spent the majority of their time in their cells, in solitary prayer: images, especially ones as rich in detail as the Frick and Exeter Virgins, would have offered endless possibilities for examination, helping to relieve the mental strain of complete isolation.

The function of the Frick Virgin is more difficult to ascertain. Previous studies have identified it as either a devotional work or an altarpiece. A recent examination of the archives of the Utrecht charterhouse—where Vos took the panel after leaving Bruges in 1450—provides compelling evidence that it had served as his memorial, a type of funerary monument popular in northern Europe during the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Broadly defined, memorials (also called votive tablets or epitaphs) were large painted or sculpted tablets that depicted a deceased donor being introduced by saints to holy figures—in most cases the Virgin and Child—whose intercession they sought. Generally, memorials would be placed above the tomb of the deceased, thus functioning as grave markers. Their frames usually bore an inscription that identified the deceased and petitioned passers-by to pray for the repose of the deceased's soul. Indeed, during the fifteenth century, prayers from the living were believed to hasten the release of the deceased's soul from purgatory into heaven, and memorials were created specifically in order to secure suffrages for the dead.

This was not the first time that Van Eyck was commissioned to paint a memorial: his monumental *Virgin and Child with the Canon Joris van der Paele* (ca. 1434–36) originally hung in Bruges's Church of Saint-Donatian, where Van der Paele was buried. (It is now in the Groeningemuseum

in Bruges.) Another memorial by the artist, *The Virgin and Child with Nicolas van Maelbeke*, was completed probably around the time Vos arrived in Bruges. Although lost, the panel is known through two silverpoint drawings from about 1445 (now in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg and the Albertina, Vienna). The latter (above) is featured in the exhibition. This composition informed the Exeter Virgin and shows the impact of Van Eyck's legacy on the younger painter.

When Vos began his tenure as prior of Genadedal, he was probably in his fifties, an age when one usually started planning for death. By then Van Eyck had completed his memorials for Van der Paele and Van Maelbeke, which may have been known by Vos, perhaps prompting him to commission the artist to produce a similar (though more modestly scaled) memorial for himself.

In 1443, about two years after the completion of the Frick Virgin, Vos petitioned his acquaintance, Bishop Martin de Blija, to attach to the memorial an indulgence—that is, a grant that promised passers-by a remission of time served in purgatory in exchange for their prayers. Specifically, the indulgence guaranteed forty days of pardon to whoever would greet the Virgin in the Frick panel with the Ave Maria, the first line of which, significantly, appears embroidered on the canopy behind the Virgin, suggesting that Vos always intended to seek an indulgence for the panel. The painting's imagery thus invited viewers to recite the indulgenced prayer. The indulgence could also be gained by saluting the panel's images of Saint Barbara or Saint Elizabeth by reciting both the Ave Maria and the Pater Noster. Forty-day indulgences were by no means uncommon during the late Middle Ages, and they were frequently granted to encourage prayers in front of newly made objects. As a spiritual privilege granted to the Carthusians, the indulgence was only valid as long as the image remained within the order. Thus, on the walls of The Frick Collection, the Virgin has lost its supposed power of spiritual remission.

What prompted Vos to seek an indulgence for his memorial? Effectively, the indulgence made the painting's beholder a mutually beneficial offer: in addition to benefitting Vos's soul, the recitation of special prayers in front of the panel would also improve the viewer's prospects for salvation through the remission offered by the indulgence. Vos thus used the indulgence to call attention to his memorial and incentivize suffrages for his soul among his fellow monks. In procuring the indulgence, Vos transformed the panel into a currency in the economy of salvation that pervaded the era.

The Frick and Exeter Virgins survived the destruction of the Bruges and Utrecht charterhouses during the religious wars, in 1578 and 1580 respectively. While Vos's body lies anonymously somewhere beneath the residential buildings that now stand on the site of the Utrecht charterhouse where he died in 1462, his memorial hangs on the walls of The Frick Collection. Venerated today for its artistic qualities rather than as an object that helped one secure salvation, Vos's memorial has fulfilled its function, though perhaps not in the way that he had anticipated: it has kept alive the memory of this Carthusian monk, whose patronage of Van Eyck and Petrus Christus gave us two masterworks of early Netherlandish painting.—*Emma Capron, Anne L. Poulet Curatorial Fellow*

The exhibition is organized by Emma Capron, Anne L. Poulet Curatorial Fellow, The Frick Collection. Major funding for the exhibition is provided by Howard S. Marks and Nancy Marks and an anonymous gift in memory of Melvin R. Seiden. Additional support is generously provided by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the General Delegation of the Government of Flanders to the U.S., Mr. and Mrs. Michael J. Horvitz, Margot and Jerry Bogert, Harlan M. Stone, an anonymous donor, the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, and Nicholas Hall.

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SPECIAL EXHIBITION

Masterpieces of French Faience

Selections from the Sidney R. Knafel Collection

October 10, 2018, through September 22, 2019

Over the last fifty years, Trustee Sidney R. Knafel has amassed one of the world's most important private collections of faience. Seventy-five pieces from his collection are on display in the Portico Gallery for the next year—all of them a promised gift to The Frick Collection—including masterpieces from manufactories in Lyon, Nevers, and Rouen.

Faience is the term used for tin-glazed earthenware produced in France during the sixteenth through eighteenth century. Historically, pieces were thrown on a potter's wheel, formed in a mold or, less frequently, shaped by hand. Because the clay used was porous, it was covered with a vitreous glaze made of silica (sand) to make the vessels impermeable. With the addition of tin oxide, the transparent glaze became white and opaque, thus masking the clay's natural red or gray color and providing a uniformly white ground to which painted decoration composed of metallic oxides could be applied. Faience is categorized according to whether it is decorated using the *grand feu* (high fired) or *petit feu* (low fired) technique. In *grand feu*, metallic oxides are mixed with water and applied to the tin-glazed surface before being fired at a temperature of about 1650 °F. The palette is consequently limited to those oxides that can withstand such high heat: cobalt (blue), antimony (yellow), manganese (purple-brown), iron (red-orange), and copper (green). Upon firing, the oxides are absorbed by and permanently fused into the tin-glazed layer. With the vogue for porcelain at its height during the mid-eighteenth century, the desire to expand faience's limited range of colors led French potters to develop the *petit feu* technique, in which objects were painted after firing and then fired a second time—a process that allowed for a more extensive palette. The Knafel collection comprises pieces made exclusively with the *grand feu* technique.

Before its production in France, tin-glazed earthenware had been made for centuries. The technique was developed in the Middle East before the ninth century and spread as a result of Arab conquests and commercial exchanges in the Mediterranean, arriving in Italy in the thirteenth century. Known as maiolica in Italy, tin-glazed earthenware experienced a golden age during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and manufactories flourished in Urbino, Casteldurante, Pesaro, Faenza, Deruta, and Gubbio. Italian Renaissance maiolica elevated tin-glazed earthenware from a sophisticated type of pottery to an ambitious art form rivaling contemporary silver and also strongly influencing the production of tin-glazed earthenware in France. This influence is reflected in the French word *faience*, which derives from Faenza, the city in northern Italy that was

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THIS PAGE
Dish, Nevers, ca. 1630–50, tin-glazed earthenware, attributed to the workshop of Antoine Conrade. All objects illustrated are from the Sidney R. Knafel Collection.

OPPOSITE PAGE
Ewer, Nevers, ca. 1680, tin-glazed earthenware

an important center of maiolica production during the Renaissance.

The production of tin-glazed earthenware in France is directly related to the arrival in Lyon, during the second half of the sixteenth century, of several Italian maiolica potters and painters who were seeking opportunities outside Italy. Lyon was a culturally rich city at the crossroads of Italy, France, and the Holy Roman Empire, with a large Italian community, documented as early as 1512. Many Italian ceramists are known to have established themselves in Lyon, although their work has not yet been identified. The only recorded objects with signatures are those painted by Gironimo Tomasi, who worked in Urbino and Albissola before immigrating to Lyon. Stylistic comparison suggests that three pieces in the Knafel collection were possibly made by Tomasi in Lyon, sometime between his arrival in the city, in 1581, and his death, in 1602. These rare objects, among them a plate illustrated on page 8, are painted in the tradition of those produced a generation earlier by the Fontana workshop in Urbino, where Tomasi received his early training.

In the early 1590s, Lyon lost its political and economic independence, which adversely affected the growth of the city's manufactories and workshops, including those making faience. Famine and fear of plague further prompted the city's Italian potters to move to Nevers, in central France, which had been ruled by an Italian prince, Luigi Gonzaga of Mantua, since his marriage in 1565 to Henriette of Cleves. Among the numerous Italian artists and craftsmen Gonzaga attracted to Nevers was Augustin

CHRISTOPHE PERLÈS

Conrade (also known as Agostino di Domenico Conrado), whose family went on to dominate the production of faience in Nevers until the mid-seventeenth century, at a time when Nevers was the only town in France producing faience. Originally from Albissola in Liguria, Conrade spent a few years in Lyon prior to establishing a workshop in Nevers, in 1584, where he was soon joined by his nephews Dominique, Baptiste, and Bernardin. In 1608, Dominique founded the faience manufactory called Les Trois Rois (The Three Kings), and, in 1610, Baptiste opened La Croix d'Or (The Golden Cross). Antoine Conrade, great nephew of Augustin, was the head of Les Trois Mores (The Three Moors), the largest workshop in Nevers from 1626 until his death, in 1647. This workshop is likely to have produced the spectacular dish illustrated on page 6, whose complex shape and decoration combining sphinx-like creatures, winged figures, and fantastic grotesques are largely inspired by Italian models. Its monochrome blue decoration, however, was produced mainly in Nevers but never in Italy.

By the middle of the seventeenth century, Italian potters had been established in France for several generations, and some native French potters had no Italian roots at all, thus the Italian influence had become weaker. In Nevers, potters and painters began to explore new types of decoration, forging an artistic identity distinct from their Italian predecessors. At the forefront of this effort was the introduction of a dark blue background, often referred to as "Nevers blue," represented in the Knafel collection by a large ewer (page 7), one of the most ambitious examples of French faience. Its shape recalls silver ewers used at the court of Louis XIV, while its painted decoration—figures wearing turbans, a shepherdess spinning a distaff, and peddlers—derives from early seventeenth-century French literature, including the popular novel *L'Astrée,* by Honoré d'Urfé (published 1607–27). This exceptional piece was originally intended for display during a banquet, set out on a credenza to impress guests, either inside a princely residence or outdoors in a lavish *jardin à la française* (French garden).

Rouen became an active center of faience production when, in 1644, Nicolas Poiret was granted a royal privilege from Louis XIV that gave him the exclusive right to produce faience in Normandy for the next fifty years. Edme Poterat directed Poiret's manufactory until 1674, when he acquired it. With such an advantageous monopoly, Poterat and his two sons, Michel and Louis, transformed Rouen into a major center of faience production in Europe. When the royal privilege expired in 1698, several new faience manufactories opened in the city. The first half of the eighteenth century saw the establishment of eighteen manufactories, fourteen of which operated simultaneously. The signature motif of Rouen faience at this time was a type of intricate decoration, called *lambrequins*, which imitated embroidery. The tradition evolved from the practice of late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Chinese potters,

LEFT TO RIGHT
Plate, Lyon, ca. 1582–85, tin-glazed earthenware, with painting attributed to Gironimo Tomasi

Platter, Rouen, ca. 1725, tin-glazed earthenware

Platter, Moustiers, ca. 1730–40, tin-glazed earthenware, produced by the Clérissy manufactory

who adorned finished porcelain objects with a piece of embroidery. Later, Chinese potters painted export porcelain with motifs reminiscent of the embroidered decorations, inspiring Dutch, Nevers, and Rouen potters to do the same. It was in Rouen, however, that this style of painted decoration became the most elaborate. Pieces in the Knafel collection demonstrate the varied ways in which the lambrequin motif was adapted in Rouen—sometimes covering an entire object and other times used in borders, thick or thin, surrounding a central scene such as children playing, bouquets of flowers, or coats of arms (see above center).

Intended to help fund France's ongoing and costly wars, sumptuary laws passed by Louis XIV in 1679, 1689, and 1709 contributed to the rapid geographic expansion and stylistic development of faience. In December 1689, the Sun King sent his private collection of silver furniture to the royal mint to be melted down, an example reluctantly followed by the aristocracy, who were pressured to relinquish their own precious metal objects—mostly silver table services—for the benefit of the state. As described about 1715 by the celebrated French memoirist Saint-Simon, this resulted in a sudden craze among French aristocrats for domestic faience: "In eight days, all who were of grand or considerable standing used only faience services. They emptied the shops selling it, and ignited a heated frenzy for this merchandise."

In the late seventeenth century, Provence emerged as an important center of faience production, with workshops opening at Moustiers and in the port city of Marseille. The masterpiece of Moustiers faience in the Knafel collection is a large platter from the Clérissy manufactory (above), which depicts a complex scene with Asian merchants in the foreground and soldiers in the background, painted in monochrome blue with yellow highlights and touches of green.

In the early days of faience production, objects were costly and therefore acquired, collected, and gifted exclusively by patrons at the highest levels of French society. Consequently, early pieces from Lyon and Nevers were intended only for display. The spread of faience workshops in Nevers, Rouen, and elsewhere in France during the eighteenth century changed the status of these objects and, ultimately, their function. One of the most important changes was the use of faience to serve food. To ensure the success of their workshops, French potters—beginning in Rouen—closely followed the culinary developments at the time. For instance, they created multiple dishes in different forms and sizes in response to the popularity of the *service à la française,* an elaborate style of dining wherein various components of a course were served at the same time. Such inventiveness reflects the ingenuity of French potters, who, over the course of two centuries, produced pieces of great originality and technical complexity, the finest of which are represented by impressive examples in the Knafel collection. The quality of such pieces almost obscures the fact that faience was essentially a provincial art, largely patronized and commissioned by a local aristocracy, far from the centers of political power in Versailles and Paris.—*Charlotte Vignon, Curator of Decorative Arts*

The exhibition is organized by Charlotte Vignon, Curator of Decorative Arts, The Frick Collection. Major support is provided by Melinda and Paul Sullivan and The Selz Foundation. Additional funding is generously provided by Helen-Mae† and Seymour R. Askin, Barbara G. Fleischman, Anne K. Groves, Mr. and Mrs. Michael J. Horvitz, Nancy A. Marks, Peter and Sofia Blanchard, Margot and Jerry Bogert, Jane Condon and Kenneth G. Bartels, Mr. and Mrs. Jean-Marie Eveillard, Barbara and Thomas C. Israel, and Monika McLennan.

SPECIAL EXHIBITION

Luigi Valadier

Splendor in Eighteenth-Century Rome

October 31, 2018, through January 20, 2019

Over the past several years, the Frick has presented a number of exhibitions that have focused on eighteenth-century decorative arts and the influential artists of the era, beginning in 2012 with Johann Christian Neuber and continuing, most recently, with Pierre Gouthière. This monographic exhibition on Luigi Valadier follows in the footsteps of these two projects, shifting the focus from Germany and France to Italy.

Valadier was a talented draftsman, designer, bronze founder, and gold- and silversmith, who used a remarkable range of materials—including precious stones, enamel, wood, and glass—to create whimsical and elegant works of art. His career spanned most of the second half of the eighteenth century, during a period when Rome was one of the foremost destinations visited by foreigners on the Grand Tour. Many of these tourists were also his clients, who took his fantastic creations back with them to the capitals of Europe. Rome was also an important center for archaeological discoveries, responsible for transporting the ancient world into the minds and imaginations of the public and producing a stylistic shift that we now describe as "Neoclassicism." Valadier was a central figure in this movement. His first designs, typically close in style to French objects produced around the same time, can be loosely described as baroque or rococo. Over the years, however, he became more interested in antiquity, and his works became more classically influenced. Although scant details are known about Valadier's life, his surviving oeuvre is a testament to the ambitious breadth of his career. The exhibition brings together more than sixty works by the master, broadly divided into three categories: the first focuses on his revival of antiquity, the second on his religious works, and a third on his secular output.

Valadier was born in Rome in 1726, to French parents who had emigrated from Avignon, in the south of France, to Rome, where his father, André, established a silversmith workshop that became one of the best known in the city. In 1759, Luigi inherited his father's business, and his technical expertise and elegant style led to a successful career. He presided over a bustling shop located on the corner of what is today Via del Babuino and Via d'Alibert, where he moved in 1762, following his father's death. For more than twenty years, Luigi and his eighty assistants produced objects not only for the pope and the noble families of Rome—among them the Borghese, Colonna, Chigi, Odescalchi, Sforza Cesarini, and Giustiniani—but also for foreign aristocrats and the monarchs of

THIS PAGE, LEFT TO RIGHT
Workshop of Luigi Valadier, *Design for the Temple of Mercury*, ca. 1778, pen, ink, and watercolor on paper, Museo Napoleonico, Rome

Luigi Valadier (1726–1785), *Reduction of the Temple of Mercury*, ca. 1778, lapis lazuli, amethyst, garnet, red porphyry, *portasanta*, green porphyry, and gilt bronze, Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid

OPPOSITE PAGE
Valadier, *The Triumph of Bacchus*, 1780, agate, alabaster, ancient hardstones, ancient glass paste, gold, gilt metal, and gilt bronze, Musée du Louvre, Paris

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France, England, Spain, Portugal, and Russia. Although surviving documents convey the scale and success of Valadier's workshop, he was financially burdened by commissions that were never paid. In 1785, he committed suicide by drowning himself in the Tiber.

Valadier was particularly well known for the creation of elaborate table centerpieces, known in Rome as *desers*. (The word is a phonetic transcription of the French word *dessert*, from the French verb *desservir*, signifying the clearing of services from tables laid with successive courses.) These sprawling ensembles were comprised of small-scale reproductions of ancient temples, obelisks, and triumphal arches, made from precious marbles, stones, and metal. With his extraordinary eye for detail, Valadier translated the vestiges of Roman antiquity into refined masterworks, erecting miniature ruins across the courtly tables of Europe.

Three nearly intact *desers* by Valadier survive at the Hermitage in St. Petersburg; the Museo Arqueológico Nacional and the Patrimonio Nacional, Palacio Real, in Madrid; and the Louvre in Paris. The first two were made for Jacques-Laure Le Tonnelier, Bailli de Breteuil, the ambassador of the Knights of Malta to the Holy See and, later,

the royal court in Paris. (They were subsequently acquired by Catherine the Great and by Charles IV, king of Spain.) Valadier created the third *deser* in 1783 for Duke Luigi Braschi Onesti, the nephew of Pope Pius VI.

Each *deser* is composed of a raised platform on which various architectural objects rest. In the case of the first *deser* made for Breteuil, the architectural elements survive, but the base is lost. The Braschi *deser,* which was looted by Napoleon, only partially survives. The most complete of Valadier's three existing *desers* is the second he made for Breteuil, about 1778. Its components are now in Madrid (divided between the Museo Arqueológico Nacional and the Patrimonio Nacional, Palacio Real), but are reunited at The Frick Collection. The five structures that comprise the *deser* are made from a number of different marbles and semi-precious stones; one, a temple (page 10, right), is created from lapis lazuli, amethyst, porphyry, and red garnets. Its preparatory drawing (page 10, left) shows a garland and three vases adorning the temple's top, but these decorative elements have been lost to time.

Valadier's revival of antiquity was not limited to *desers*. Using ancient relics as inspiration, he frequently produced innovative and imaginative work. In 1780, for instance, Valadier mounted for Pope Pius VI a series of antique cameos that had belonged to Cardinal Carpegna. The resulting pieces, the *Triumph of Bacchus* and *Bacchus and Ariadne,* are both included in the exhibition. In *The Triumph of Bacchus* (page 11), Valadier set a large rectangular cameo within a frame elaborately decorated with other precious cameos and engraved gems, then rested the frame atop the backs of two gilt-bronze Egyptian-style lions. Below the lions he simulated a pool of water, carved from stone, with small cameo representations of fish.

A large number of Valadier's commissions came from ecclesiastical institutions. In the late 1760s and the early 1770s, he designed the extraordinary silver high altar for the Cathedral of Santa Maria la Nuova, in Monreale, Sicily (page 15). Commissioned by Archbishop Francesco Testa, the altar, still *in situ*, is decorated with reliefs depicting scenes from the life of the Virgin, to whom the church is dedicated. The altar is positioned directly in front of celebrated Norman mosaics dating from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, which are the glory of the church. On top of the altar, Valadier placed six silver and gilt-bronze statues of saints: Louis, Castrense, Peter, Paul, Benedict (page 14), and Rosalia. All six sculptures have been lent for the exhibition—the first time they have left the cathedral—providing an extraordinary opportunity to study them outside Sicily. On the Monreale altar, they are displayed in a row with candlesticks between them. At the Frick, they are shown on an altar-like pedestal, in the same order they appear in the cathedral.

We know from invoices, payment records, and inventories that Valadier created many more objects, but, sadly, most were destroyed during the Napoleonic invasion of Italy, when Rome was pillaged and vast quantities of gold and silver objects were melted down. Works that survived, such as the Monreale altar, did so because they were located in provincial regions of Italy, far from the major cities and Napoleon's army.

Most of Valadier's secular silver production was lost. For the aristocratic families of Italy as well as foreign patrons, he created hundreds of silver plates, soup tureens, coffee pots, cutlery, and lamps, though often these objects are preserved only in drawings. Valadier produced incredibly detailed preparatory drawings, such as that of an elegant *trembleuse*, from the early 1760s (left). These small metal trays—either in silver or gilt silver—were intended to hold two cups: one usually in porcelain, for coffee or

THIS PAGE
Valadier, *Design for a Trembleuse (Digiuné)*, before 1762, pen, brown ink, and brown and ocher wash on paper, private collection

OPPOSITE PAGE
Valadier, *Coffee Pot with the Chigi Coat of Arms*, 1777, silver, private collection

MICHAEL BODYCOMB

chocolate, and the second in glass, for water. A matching tray would have held biscuits or sweets. In this specific case, the *trembleuse* incorporates highly decorative vegetal imagery. The tray calls to mind a large leaf, and the holders for the cups are decorated with similar motifs. The water cup is surrounded by reeds, while the coffee or chocolate cup holder is decorated by small beans, likely referring to the origin of the drinks. The drawing conveys the sophistication of the similarly beautiful lost domestic objects produced by Valadier, and the exhibition presents several rare survivals, including two soup tureens, one made for the Chigi family, and a spoon that was originally part of a large service for the Borghese.

A coffee pot (page 13) engraved with the Chigi family's coat of arms is another rare example of Valadier's surviving secular silver. Only a small number of coffee pots by Valadier still exist, and this is certainly the most monumental. The vessel's conventional shape is enlivened by decoration both vegetal and animal. The body is covered in leaves and geometric patterns, while the spout is supported by a dazzling mask of a woman, morphing into the neck and head of a fantastic bird. The object epitomizes Valadier's imagination and visual acumen.

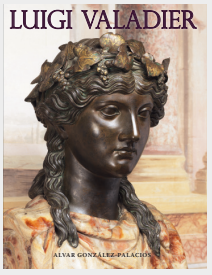
In 2017, the Frick acquired its first object by Valadier, a marble vase made in the late

MAURO MAGLIANI

RIGHT
Valadier, *St. Benedict*, ca. 1773, silver and gilt bronze, Cathedral of Santa Maria la Nuova, Monreale, Sicily. The photograph on the opposite page shows the statue *in situ*, atop the cathedral's high altar.

Groundbreaking Monograph by Alvar González-Palacios

First in English Devoted to Valadier



The Frick's exhibition celebrates the publication of the first monograph in English devoted to Luigi Valadier. Written by Alvar González-Palacios, the show's curator and the world's foremost expert on the artist, the book provides an exhaustive and vivid account of Valadier's art, yet is also of interest to anyone approaching the subject for the first time. In words and images, it recreates a number of objects that have been lost, but are evoked through period descriptions and drawings.

The book's publication prompted a series of photographic campaigns sponsored by the Frick to document Valadier's most important works in Italy, not only in museums and private collections, but *in situ* in churches and palaces in Rome, Basilicata, and Sicily. Beautifully photographed by Mauro Magliani, the results of the campaign are meant to inspire readers to seek out these masterpieces in their original contexts.

The book is available in the Museum Shop as well as online at frick.org/shop.

1770s, the only known vase by him with gilt-silver decorations. (An article about the vase appeared in the Spring/Summer 2018 issue of *The Members' Magazine*.) Although a number of similar vases exist, they feature decorations in gilt bronze, rather than the more costly gilt silver. The vase is carved from *rosso Appennino*, a rarely seen blood-red marble quarried in central Italy. The precious materials of the vase and the quality of the chasing of its mounts suggest that it was a private commission for an extremely wealthy client, possibly Prince Sigismondo Chigi, one of Valadier's most important patrons at the time. The vase is displayed alongside other stunning objects brought together from public institutions and private collections across Europe and the United States, enabling a New York audience to discover this little known but very significant Italian artist.—*Xavier F. Salomon, Peter Jay Sharp Chief Curator*

The exhibition was curated by art historian Alvar González-Palacios. Principal support is provided by Jo Carole and Ronald S. Lauder, The Peter Jay Sharp Foundation, an anonymous gift in memory of Melvin R. Seiden, Marina Kellen French and the Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation, and Nicola Bulgari. Additional support has been provided by Robilant + Voena; Alessandra di Castro; Monika McLennan; Margot and Jerry Bogert; Ayesha Bulchandani; Carlo Orsi, Trinity Fine Art; Walter Padovani; Rachel Fleishman and Paul Andrejkovics III; James C. Marlas and Marie Nugent-Head Marlas; and Jane Richards in honor of Elizabeth Eveillard.

Bertoldo di Giovanni's *Shield Bearer*

Bronze Statuette Offers a Preview of Next Year's Fall Exhibition

The Frick Collection is the only institution outside of Europe fortunate enough to have a statuette by the Italian sculptor Bertoldo di Giovanni. The diminutive *Shield Bearer* (opposite page), measuring just over 8.5 inches high, will be featured next fall in *Bertoldo di Giovanni: The Renaissance of Sculpture in Medici Florence*, the first exhibition devoted to the sculptor, who was one of the most inventive artists working in Italy during the fifteenth century.

The *Shield Bearer* depicts an idealized youth, naked save for the garland of leaves woven through his curly hair and the tendrils of vines encircling his waist and chest. He stands contrapposto, with a shield in one hand and a club in the other. The bronze is rich in detail, with much painstaking work completed by hand after the metal was cast. The areas of gilding that remain are original, indicating that the statuette's entire surface once gleamed luxuriously, drawing even more attention to the intricacies of its design and execution. In the mid-fifteenth century, Bertoldo, along with other Florentine artists including Donatello, Verrocchio, and Antonio del Pollaiuolo, began to produce such statuettes, which were inspired by ancient bronzes of similar size and subject matter. These small-scale works reward close examination and extended contemplation through the revelation of unexpected details. Such objects were prized by erudite collectors, who displayed them in their studies within larger assemblies of ancient and Renaissance artworks.

OPPOSITE PAGE
Bertoldo di Giovanni (ca. 1435–1491), *Shield Bearer,* early 1470s, gilded bronze, The Frick Collection

The Frick statuette's early provenance remains unknown. Its first recorded owner was the American art historian Charles Loeser, who had the bronze in his renowned collection in Florence at the turn of the twentieth century. Presumably, Loeser sold it to the Parisian dealer Emile Lowengard, who in turn sold it in 1905 to J. P. Morgan, one of his most illustrious clients. In 1912, the statuette, along with the majority of Morgan's art from his London home and other objects from his collection that had been on view at the Victoria and Albert Museum, were shipped to New York for an exhibition at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. To display his collection at the Met had long been a dream of Morgan's, but he died unexpectedly in 1913, a year before the exhibition opened. The show nonetheless proved a massive success, attracting 8,000 visitors on the first day and more than a million during its first year, including Henry Clay Frick. Two years later, Frick bolstered his Renaissance holdings by purchasing a number of Limoges enamels and fifty bronzes from the exhibition, including the statuette.

The bronze has been known by various names: upon its sale to Morgan, it was identified as a "faun disguised as Hercules"; at the Met, it was displayed as a "Heraldic Wild Man"; and on entering Frick's collection, it was described simply as a "Heraldic figure." Over the past century, scholars have continued to debate its iconography. The club held by the youth is often associated with Hercules, who is frequently depicted with such a weapon. The medieval myth of the "wild man," however, is most often cited. These creatures supposedly inhabited the depths of the forest, embodying the primal instincts of early man. As is the case with the statuette, a wild man is generally shown with vines wrapped around his body and leaves crowning his head, often holding a club and, at times, a shield bearing a familial coat-of-arms. The defining characteristic of a wild man, however, is a thick layer of hair from head to toe, a trait the Frick statuette notably lacks. Close study of the figure reveals three additional details that make the traditional identification of the figure as either Hercules or a wild man problematic: the pan pipes at his waist, the horns emerging from his forehead, and the tail at the base of his spine. These attributes are characteristic of a faun. Originating from Roman mythology, fauns are related to the satyrs of ancient Greek lore, both being woodland deities that are part man and part beast. This identification, however, is also imperfect: fauns have the bodies of men but the legs and hooves of goats, which are clearly absent in the Frick statuette.

The iconographic inconsistencies may well have have been intentional, as such statuettes were prized for their ability to inspire conversation and debate. It is possible that Bertoldo invented this hybrid figure by combining disparate elements of these characters, or that he derived the iconography from a now-lost text or image. Florence, at the time, was a crucible for the artistic reinterpretation of the ancient literature and art circulating among the city's most powerful patrons. Artists contributed to the idea of a new Golden Age in Italy with their classically inspired creations, promoting an idealized ancient past. The *Shield Bearer* references heroes and creatures of Greek and Roman mythology, while at the same time offering

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an unfixed identity designed to intrigue a learned Renaissance mind.

While the precise meaning of the statuette's iconography remains uncertain, its attribution to Bertoldo has been uncontested since its reemergence at the turn of the twentieth century. Bertoldo di Giovanni was born in obscurity in Florence to immigrant German parents. The sculptor developed his technical skills under the master Donatello, eventually gaining the patronage of Lorenzo de' Medici, the most important political figure and patron of the arts in Renaissance Florence. Their relationship developed over decades; Bertoldo became a *familiare* of the city's de-facto ruler, moved into the Medici palace, and created statuettes, reliefs, and medals for the family. Bertoldo's responsibilities went beyond sculpture; he took part in creating spectacles for festivals, devised entertainment for the Medici entourage, and traveled with the Florentine retinue at Lorenzo's whim. He was also the curator of Lorenzo's famed garden of antiquities and instructed the city's most gifted pupils, whom Lorenzo himself had invited to study at his informal academy. One such student was the teenage Michelangelo, whose creative genius flourished under Bertoldo's guidance. Upon Bertoldo's death, Bartolomeo Dei, a local notary in the service of the Medici, described him as "a most worthy sculptor and an excellent maker of medals, who made fine things with Lorenzo the Magnificent . . . who is now very troubled for there is no other artist in Tuscany or perhaps even Italy of such grand ingenuity and artistry in these things."

Visitors to the Frick will have the opportunity to experience Bertoldo's genius in the fall of 2019, when his entire extant oeuvre will be reunited for the first time. Works of art ranging from bronze medals to wooden statues to terracotta friezes will highlight his innovation across media. The exhibition also marks the first comprehensive campaign of technical examinations conducted on the sculptor's works, illuminating his creative process. Together, the exhibition and catalogue will bring into focus Bertoldo's unique position at the heart of the artistic and political landscape in fifteenth-century Florence.—*Alexander J. Noelle, Anne L. Poulet Curatorial Fellow*

Spring Garden Party and Fellows Luncheon

The Frick Thanks Its Most Dedicated Supporters

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTINE A. BUTLER AND CARL TIMPONE/BFA.COM

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Nearly eight hundred Fellows and Young Fellows gathered in the Fifth Avenue Garden on May 30 for the annual Spring Garden Party. The event is the institution's way of thanking its most loyal members for their ongoing involvement and support.

The Frick Art Reference Library was the focus of this year's Behind-the-Scenes Luncheon, on September 25. Stephen Bury, Andrew W. Mellon Chief Librarian, spoke about the library's varied programs and activities, including its pioneering digital initiatives. After lunch, guests explored several rooms of the mansion's second floor, where they heard brief presentations by library and archive staff.

More than eight hundred undergraduate and graduate students kicked off the school year by attending the Frick's popular College Night, on September 21. The free Friday night event featured live music, gallery talks, and sketching in the Garden Court. For the first time, the Reading Room of the Frick Art Reference Library was open for participants to enjoy.

Members at the Fellows level enjoy exclusive benefits that deepen their connection to the Frick through thought-provoking programming and special behind-the-scenes access. For information about upgrading your membership, please call 212.547.6870.

Spring Garden Party

1. Ian Wardropper, Annabelle Selldorf, and Thelma Golden 2. Larry Milstein, Toby Milstein, Xavier F. Salomon, and Dylan Giostra 3. Sarah McNear and Barbara Evans 4. Howard Lepow, Betty Eveillard, and Sally Lepow 5. Michael Truettner, Salone Loney, Madeline Roberts, Peter Darrow, and Justin Kuczmarski 6. Mark and Rochelle Rosenberg with Cole Harrell and Tai-Heng Cheng 7. Emie Diamond, Casey Kohlberg, Laura Day Webb, and Rachel Kessler 8. Monika McLennan, Janie Woo Scher, Bibi Lewandowska, and Stephen Scher 13. Fifth Avenue Garden at dusk

Behind-the-Scenes Luncheon

9. Marian and Richard Bott 10. Barton English and Barbara Dau 11. Kate Reibel, Jessica Casey, and Christina Eberli 12. Edward Lee Cave and Michele Beiny Harkins

Student Programs

14. Sketching in the Garden Court 15. College Night attendees 16. Members of the East Harlem School Poetry Club

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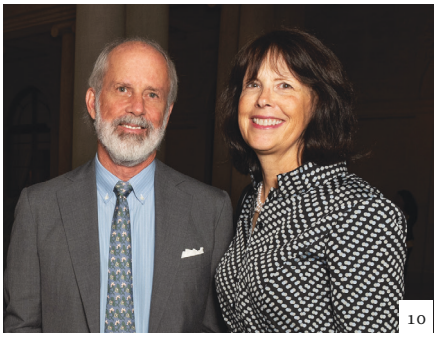

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GEORGE KOELLE

Please visit frick.org/calendar to see a complete listing of programs as well as upcoming special events.

Member Events

Registration for these events is required. To register, upgrade, or renew your membership, call 212.547.0707 or email members@frick.org.

Thursday, November 8, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.
Member Evening Viewing, *Luigi Valadier: Splendor in Eighteenth-Century Rome.*
For Contributing Friends and above.

Tuesday, November 13, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Fellows Gallery Talk, *Luigi Valadier: Splendor in Eighteenth-Century Rome.*
For Fellows at all levels.

Tuesday, December 4, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Holiday Cheer. For Contributing Fellows, Contributing Young Fellows, and above.

Wednesday, December 12, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Young Fellows Gallery Talk, *Luigi Valadier: Splendor in Eighteenth-Century Rome.*
Exclusively for Young Fellows.

Lectures

Unless otherwise noted, lectures are free. Seating is first come, first served. Selected lectures are webcast live and archived for future viewing. Visit frick.org/live for details.

Wednesday, November 14, 6:00 p.m.
Artistic Patrimony and the Public Museum in Eighteenth-Century Rome
Christopher M. S. Johns, Vanderbilt University

Wednesday, December 19, 6:00 p.m.
Seeing God and the Duke: The Charterhouse of Champmol
Susie Nash, The Courtauld Institute of Art

Annual Fund

Give to the Annual Fund to double your impact! Thanks to the generosity of Trustee Stephen A. Schwarzman, your donation to the Annual Fund will go twice as far. Donate by December 31 and every gift will be matched by Mr. Schwarzman, dollar for dollar. *Please give generously!*

Seminars

Engage in thought-provoking discussion and gain unparalleled access to masterpieces when the galleries are closed to the public. Registration is required; register at frick.org/seminars or call 212.547.0704. $90 for members; $100 for general public

Tuesday, November 27, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.
Claude's *Sermon on the Mount*
Rika Burnham, The Frick Collection

Thursday, December 13, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.
Luigi Valadier: Splendor in Eighteenth-Century Rome
Xavier F. Salomon, The Frick Collection

Drawing Programs

Drawing programs are suitable for all skill levels, and materials are provided. Visit frick.org/draw for details and additional dates.

Selected Wednesdays, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
November 7 & 21 and December 5 & 19
Wednesday Atelier
Sketch among the Old Masters in the tranquil, historic galleries of the Frick. *Free advance online registration is required; to register, visit frick.org/draw. Registration includes after-hours access to selected galleries. Children under ten are not admitted.*

Concerts

Visit frick.org/concerts for detailed program information, more concerts, and to purchase tickets ($40 for members; $45 for general public). Tickets are also available by calling 212.547.0715 or by mail. Children under ten are not admitted.

Sunday, December 9, 5:00 p.m.
Ensemble Correspondances, in New York debut

Sunday, January 20, 5:00 p.m.
Trio Karénine, in New York debut

Sunday, February 3, 5:00 p.m.
Calefax, wind quintet

Sunday, February 24, 5:00 p.m.
Quatuor Voce, in New York debut

In Memoriam

Henry Arnhold, 1921–2018

All at The Frick Collection mourn the loss of our dear friend Henry H. Arnhold. Mr. Arnhold, who passed away in August, was a passionate civic and philanthropic leader. His impact on the arts and, in particular, the Frick, was transformational. We will miss his passion, charisma, and humor. His generosity will be celebrated permanently through his gift to the museum of a major part of his peerless Meissen porcelain collection.

Henry Arnhold with his grandchildren Paul and Julia at the 2016 opening of *Porcelain, No Simple Matter: Arlene Shechet and the Arnhold Collection.*

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Jean-Antoine Houdon (1741–1828), *Diana the Huntress*, 1776–95, terracotta, The Frick Collection

The Frick Collection

1 East 70th Street
New York, NY 10021
212.288.0700

Collection Hours

10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday; 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Sundays; closed Mondays and holidays

Admission

Members receive unlimited free admission to The Frick Collection. Adults, $22; $17 for seniors; $12 for students. On Wednesdays from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m., visitors are invited to pay what they wish. Children under ten are not admitted.

Membership

For information regarding your membership or to give a membership as a gift, please call the membership department at 212.547.0707.

The Museum Shop

The Museum Shop is open during regular Collection hours. You may also purchase items online at frick.org or by telephone at 212.547.6848.

Frick Art Reference Library

10 East 71st Street
New York, NY 10021
212.547.0641

Library Hours

10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday; 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Saturdays; closed Sundays and holiday weekends. The library is open to researchers free of charge.

Visit our Web site at frick.org.

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SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS

The Charterhouse of Bruges: Jan van Eyck, Petrus Christus, and Jan Vos ◆ Through January 13, 2019

Masterpieces of French Faience: Selections from the Sidney R. Knafel Collection ◆ Through September 22, 2019